

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA**

11966  
**HEARING #21-11968**                      **DECEMBER 2, 2021**                      **10:00 A.M.**

**ND-2021-34-E:**

**SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF** — *Request by the Public Service Commission for an Allowable Ex Parte Briefing Regarding the Office of Regulatory Staff's Oversight of the South Carolina Public Service Authority (Santee Cooper), to Include Providing a High-Level Overview of Santee Cooper and an Update on Related Prospective Statutory Authority of the Commission.*

**ALLOWABLE EX PARTE  
BRIEFING**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Justin T. WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN  
Florence P. BELSER, VICE CHAIR; *and* COMMISSIONERS Carolyn L.  
'Carolee' WILLIAMS, Stephen M. 'Mike' CASTON, Thomas J.  
'Tom' ERVIN<sup>[A/V]</sup>, Headen B. THOMAS, and Delton W. POWERS,  
JR.<sup>[A/V]</sup>

ADVISOR TO COMMISSION: Jo Anne Wessinger Hill  
GENERAL COUNSEL

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jocelyn Boyd, Chief Clerk/Executive Director;  
Sharon P. Besley, Esq., Legal Staff; John Powers, Technical  
Advisory Staff; Jackie Thomas, Information Technology Staff;  
Melissa Purvis and Gwen Richardson, Livestream Technical  
Staff; Officer Joe Biggs; and Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-  
CM/M|GNSC, Court Reporter

**APPEARANCES:**

**BENJAMIN P. MUSTIAN, ESQUIRE**, legal representative of/for  
the **SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF**, together with  
PRESENTER **DAWN M. HIPPIE** [Chief Operating Officer]

**JOHN REAGLE, ESQUIRE**, Designated Neutral

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**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

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Note: For identification of any additional referenced materials and/or links for same, please see correspondence to be filed by the Designated Neutral.

Please note the following inclusions/attachments to the record:

- Office of Regulatory Staff's Presentation Slides (PDF)

P R O C E E D I N G S

**CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. We're here for an allowable ex parte briefing offered or presented by the Office of Regulatory Staff. Today is December 2nd – Thursday, December 2nd. It's 10 a.m.

Present in the hearing room are Commissioners J. Williams, C. Williams, Caston, Belser, and Thomas. Joining us virtually we have Commissioners Ervin and Powers.

General Counsel Wessinger Hill?

**MS. HILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Commissioners, and to all who are present in person and virtually.

Today, Thursday, December 2nd, we are here in the Commission's hearing room pursuant to a Notice of Request for Allowable Ex Parte Briefing from the Office of Regulatory Staff regarding its oversight of the South Carolina Public Service Authority which is also commonly known as Santee Cooper. The subject matter to be discussed at the briefing today is related to the Office of Regulatory Staff's oversight for Santee Cooper and any special information on Santee Cooper's operations, and an

1 update on the statutory authority given to the  
2 Public Service Commission in terms of the  
3 Commission's responsibilities regarding Santee  
4 Cooper prospectively, beginning January 1, 2022.

5 This is a briefing and not a hearing. The  
6 briefing must be conducted in compliance with the  
7 provisions of South Carolina Code Section 58-3-  
8 260(C). The requirements of the statute are, in  
9 part, that the allowable ex parte be confined to  
10 the subject matter which has been noticed; and for  
11 this briefing, the notice issued actually says as  
12 follows: The scope is the Office of Regulatory  
13 Staff's oversight of Santee Cooper and any special  
14 information on Santee Cooper's operations, and an  
15 update on the statutory authority given to the  
16 Public Service Commission in terms of the  
17 Commission's responsibilities regarding Santee  
18 Cooper, prospectively.

19 I, therefore, ask that any presenters,  
20 Commissioners, and Staff all please refrain from  
21 discussing any matters not related to this specific  
22 topic.

23 Secondly, the statute prohibits any presenter,  
24 Commissioners, or Commission Staff from requesting  
25 or giving any commitment, predetermination, or

1 prediction regarding any action by any Commissioner  
2 as to any ultimate issue which either is or is  
3 likely to come before the Commission.

4 Third, I would ask that the presenters,  
5 Commissioners, and Staff refrain from referencing  
6 any report, article, statute, or document of any  
7 kind that are not included in today's presentation.  
8 A copy of any document which is referenced during  
9 the briefing must be provided to the Office of  
10 Regulatory Staff<sup>[sic]</sup> for inclusion in the record  
11 which may be certified to the Chief Clerk of the  
12 Commission, which is Ms. Jocelyn Boyd. And for  
13 correction, I mean our Neutral today is Mr. John  
14 Reagle, so it would be certified by him and not the  
15 Office of Regulatory Staff.

16 Fourth, if anyone, during the course of this  
17 briefing, exceeds the scope or does not comply with  
18 or fails to conduct themselves within the  
19 provisions of the South Carolina Code Section 58-3-  
20 260 governing allowable ex parte briefings, it is  
21 expected for a contemporaneous objection to be  
22 made.

23 And, finally, everyone in attendance today, in  
24 person or virtually, must sign in or register;  
25 everyone in the hearing room or watching live

1 virtually must also read, sign, and return the form  
2 which you were given at the door when you came in  
3 today, or the form will be e-mailed to you for  
4 virtual appearance. The form does include  
5 instructions and a deadline for return of the form.  
6 It is required by law for each attendee, whether  
7 virtually appearing or in person, to certify that  
8 the requirements contained in Section 58-3-260(C)  
9 governing the allowable ex parte briefing have been  
10 complied with at this presentation.

11 I thank you-all for your time and attention,  
12 and thank you, Mr. Chairman. The docket is in  
13 order for the briefing.

14 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** All right. Office of  
15 Regulatory Staff.

16 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Good morning, Chairman  
17 and other Commissioners. My name is Dawn Hipp, and  
18 I am the Chief Operating Officer for the Office of  
19 Regulatory Staff, and I'm pleased to be here with  
20 you today.

21 Given the parameters of the briefing, I'm  
22 hoping that we can have an informal discussion  
23 about our duties under the Act. If you have  
24 questions while I go through the briefing, feel  
25 free to stop and ask, and I'll do my best to answer

1           those questions.

2           I'd really like to start with some  
3           introductions from the Office of Regulatory Staff.  
4           Here with me today from our Legal Department is Ben  
5           Mustian and Donna Rhaney.

6           **MS. RHANEY:** [Indicating.]

7           **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** And I'd also like to  
8           introduce our Santee Cooper Program Manager,  
9           Findlay Salter.

10          **MR. FINDLAY SALTER [ORS]:** [Indicating.]

11          **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** He's joining – he  
12          recently joined ORS, and he will be the lead on the  
13          Santee Cooper project for ORS. And so I just  
14          wanted to make sure you had an opportunity to see  
15          him face-to-face. I'm sure you'll see him in the  
16          future. But we're pleased to have him on board  
17          with the Office of Regulatory Staff.

18          It's always a pleasure to come before you,  
19          whether it be in a hearing or here in an allowable  
20          ex parte. I thought I'd take a couple of minutes  
21          to – oh, here we go.

22                 [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 1]

23          If I'm not directing the pointer, please let  
24          me know [indicating]. Does it go this way  
25          [indicating]?

1                   **MS. HILL:** It should be able to point  
2 anywhere.

3                   **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** [Indicating.] There we  
4 go. I thought I'd take just a few minutes and run  
5 through the ORS mission. You hear it often, when  
6 we present to you in utility rate matters. We've  
7 tried to synthesize it down into some very salient  
8 points, and that is that we are representing all  
9 customer classes and we're looking at the  
10 investment in reliable and high-quality service.  
11 And so, for customers of Santee Cooper, that will  
12 be no different. While we don't have jurisdiction  
13 over consumer complaints from Santee Cooper, Santee  
14 Cooper's customers, we do hear from them and we try  
15 to resolve those as best as we can.

16                   As you know, our mission had changed in 2018.  
17 And since that time –

18                   [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 3]

19                   – ORS has been very busy. You have seen us,  
20 in the last year, in front of you in approximately  
21 a little bit under 100 cases. And in that time  
22 period, we saved customers over \$20 million by our  
23 work in cases before you. Since ORS started, in  
24 2004, with activities in 2005, we've saved  
25 customers over \$1.9 billion in utility rates. Last



1 year, alone, the ORS and the ORS Staff, which is  
2 small but mighty – we’re a little bit under 100,  
3 around the 80-or-so number – performed  
4 approximately 533 regulatory audits and reviews.  
5 You’ve seen some of those; some of those have been  
6 in areas that are not within the Commission  
7 jurisdiction.

8 Today, though, I’d like to give you just a  
9 little bit of an overview of some of our other  
10 responsibilities. On the slide, you’ll see our  
11 Consumer Services Department. That is the group  
12 that has hands-on, direct contact with consumers of  
13 utilities. And in the last year, they recovered  
14 almost \$250,000 on behalf of consumers through  
15 informal dispute resolution with our regulated  
16 utilities. They conducted approximately 40 meter-  
17 accuracy tests, and they distributed almost 45,000  
18 pieces of consumer education and participated in  
19 presentations both virtual and in person.

20 Our Safety Department, as seen on the slide,  
21 is a combination of pipeline safety and rail  
22 safety. And those two groups conducted 400 – over  
23 400 safety inspections last year and gave 20  
24 presentations and provided technical assistance  
25 both to the regulated pipeline companies and also

1 the railroads.

2 Our transportation group is a small group, but  
3 they regulate, as you know, almost 180 household  
4 goods carriers and many, many more passenger  
5 carriers. They conducted almost 3000 inspections  
6 last year and provided over 12,000 instances of  
7 technical assistance to those regulated entities  
8 and those looking to do business in South Carolina.

9 Our telecommunications group works with  
10 customers that are hearing- or speech-impaired, and  
11 they distributed over 1400 pieces of equipment.

12 And our Energy Office, which is an unregulated  
13 body housed within the Office of Regulatory Staff,  
14 had reached 700 people last year with  
15 presentations, while reporting over \$7 million in  
16 energy savings through their actions and grants or  
17 loans or working with the public.

18 And you've heard about our broadband group.  
19 We have a newly formed broadband office under the  
20 Office of Regulatory Staff, and they have been busy  
21 with mapping, administering CARES Act funding to  
22 provide students with access to the Internet during  
23 the pandemic, and are currently administering about  
24 \$30 million in grant funding for infrastructure  
25 development.

1 And those are groups that you don't often hear  
2 from, and I thought it might be a good idea to give  
3 you just a brief overview before we hit the topic  
4 at hand, which is Santee Cooper.

5 [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 4]

6 We began our work – ORS has been working with  
7 Santee Cooper since the inception on various  
8 projects. Santee Cooper assisted us with the State  
9 Energy Plan, as you are aware. But back in 2019  
10 under Act 95, we were asked to perform an  
11 evaluation of the rate base attributed to Santee  
12 Cooper, related to V.C. Summer Units 2 and 3, and  
13 whether or not that rate base was used and useful.  
14 And that information that our Staff, both our Audit  
15 Staff and our Energy Staff looked at, was used in  
16 the discussions about the procurement and what to  
17 do with Santee Cooper under Act 95.

18 So we had started back in 2019 interfacing  
19 with the Santee Cooper team, and our actions  
20 continued in 2020. In 2020, under Act 135, ORS was  
21 requested to perform monthly reviews of Santee  
22 Cooper's activities under Section -11(E), which is  
23 a fairly nebulous section in Act 135, but we were  
24 looking at 11 areas and our review of those areas  
25 was to see if Santee Cooper was in compliance with

1 the requirements of Act 135.

2 We were looking at the closure of the Winyah  
3 Generating Station, so every month Santee Cooper  
4 would provide us a report or respond to questions  
5 that were asked by ORS, and we would take a look at  
6 the closure and their activities related to the  
7 closure of the Winyah Generating Station; their  
8 deployment of new solar, which you heard from them  
9 about; agreements with their neighboring utilities,  
10 both operational and management agreements; their  
11 agreements with coal suppliers and transportation  
12 suppliers, we performed a review on those; their  
13 natural gas hedging arrangements; their development  
14 of new natural gas transportation and power  
15 transmission, and what activities they were  
16 looking – undertaking there; their purchased-power  
17 agreements that were entered into or changed during  
18 their review period; resolutions of any lawsuits;  
19 any steps they took to comply or change their  
20 business operations due to COVID-19; their  
21 financing arrangements and their debt defeasance,  
22 any sort of issuance of debt or refunding of debt;  
23 and, finally, any actions that they may have taken  
24 related to the rate freeze in accordance with the  
25 Cook settlement that the company had entered into.

1           We completed those 11 monthly reviews and we  
2           reviewed over 10,000 pages of documents. And in  
3           that, we discovered that Santee Cooper was in  
4           compliance with the tenets of Act 135 under ORS's  
5           review. Santee Cooper had to stand up a very  
6           robust process in order to respond to the ORS  
7           information requests and provide information to  
8           ORS. Both Santee Cooper and ORS have posted that  
9           information on their website for the public to  
10          view. And we've provided you a link within the  
11          presentation to our monthly reviews.

12                           [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 5]

13          So that's historically what ORS has done  
14          within the past couple of years with Santee Cooper.  
15          Under Act 90, we'll take on some new  
16          responsibilities, and we'll talk about the new  
17          responsibilities in terms of what is within the  
18          Commission's jurisdiction and what is within ORS's  
19          oversight.

20          And so this first slide talks about the new  
21          responsibilities that ORS will undertake. In  
22          particular, we'll be looking at Santee Cooper's  
23          retail rate schedules and rate changes. So when  
24          the *Cook* settlement expires in 2024 time period,  
25          Santee Cooper will be in a position, should they

1 choose, to change or adjust any of their rates, and  
2 ORS will be involved in that process. And that  
3 process, as identified in Act 90, appears to be  
4 very similar to the Commission's process for rate-  
5 setting. In substitution of the Commission, of  
6 course, is the Board of Directors of Santee Cooper,  
7 but the legislation was careful to make sure that  
8 the process was transparent, that customers had a  
9 voice, that both ORS and the Consumer Advocate were  
10 involved: ORS in an audit-investigation-review-  
11 and-report role, and the Consumer Advocate has an  
12 opportunity to participate in the process in front  
13 of the Board of Directors.

14 It appears that the process in front of the  
15 Board of Directors related to the retail rate  
16 schedule is going to take approximately six months  
17 from beginning to end.

18 The other section that ORS has responsibility  
19 over is to take a look at Santee Cooper's Annual  
20 Pricing Principle Report. Under the Act, Santee  
21 Cooper has established some pricing principles and  
22 they have to publish those and actions that they've  
23 taken relating to the pricing principles and  
24 provide that to ORS for review and comment. And so  
25 we will begin to do that in 2023, when those duties

1           become – I’m sorry – in 2022, when those duties  
2           become effective.

3           Any questions up to this point?

4           [No response.]

5           Okay. I will continue.

6           [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 6]

7           The next slide is just a graphic of the items  
8           that the Commission will consider for Santee Cooper  
9           on a going-forward basis, and there are many. Many  
10          of them, Santee Cooper was added to our already-  
11          regulated-utility code section, and so – and those  
12          are around the service territory changes. If –  
13          Santee Cooper now has the ability to make service  
14          territory changes under the purview of the  
15          Commission, and so you will be seeing those in the  
16          future.

17          Under the Major Utility Facility Siting Act,  
18          Santee Cooper was exempt from that; they are now  
19          included in that, with some select exemptions for  
20          transmission related to Winyah or transmission  
21          started before a certain time period. And so  
22          you’ll see the major utility facility siting. Now,  
23          Santee Cooper does have some unique review aspects  
24          that the Commission has to consider under Act 90,  
25          and those items are looking at “least ratepayer

1 risk," "most beneficial," and so some of that  
2 language does not translate into your regulation of  
3 the investor-owned utilities but is very specific  
4 to Santee Cooper.

5 The acquisition of a major utility facility  
6 requires approval of this Commission. So if Santee  
7 Cooper were interested in making such acquisition,  
8 they would have to seek approval under the Act with  
9 the Commission.

10 The Commission is required to approve  
11 purchased-power agreements for Santee Cooper that  
12 exceed a certain time limit, and so you will be  
13 seeing those. Right now, the purchased-power  
14 agreements related to renewables, specifically, do  
15 not require Commission approval but Commission  
16 acceptance. And the Commission will have to  
17 approve any purchased-power agreement greater than  
18 ten years for Santee Cooper.

19 **VICE CHAIR BELSER:** Ms. Hipp?

20 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Yes, ma'am.

21 **VICE CHAIR BELSER:** Under that purchased-power  
22 agreement, those are just intrastate? Those are  
23 not anything that would come under FERC  
24 jurisdiction; is that –

25 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** That is –



1                   **VICE CHAIR BELSER:** – correct?

2                   **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** – correct. That is an  
3 exemption or a limitation within the statute.

4                   **VICE CHAIR BELSER:** Thank you.

5                   **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** The Commission will also  
6 be reviewing and approving the competitive  
7 procurement program that Santee Cooper proposes for  
8 approval. I think you heard from Santee Cooper  
9 that they have used an RFP or a request-for-  
10 proposal process to recently acquire solar, and it  
11 is expected that the process will look very similar  
12 to what Santee Cooper has used in the past. It  
13 seems to meet those requirements.

14                   And then, finally, the Commission will  
15 consider the integrated resource plan for Santee  
16 Cooper. So you're working your way through that  
17 process right now with our investor-owned  
18 utilities, and Santee Cooper will be considered in  
19 a very similar manner. Again, Santee Cooper does  
20 have some unique characteristics that the  
21 Commission will need to consider, related to their  
22 IRP. And they're customer-focused, they're cost-  
23 focused, and they're, to use – they're comparative-  
24 focused.

25                   Any questions on this slide?

1                   **COMMISSIONER ERVIN**<sup>[A/V]</sup>: I have a question.  
2                   When does the Santee Cooper IRP process begin, and  
3                   do you have some type of proposed procedural  
4                   schedule to kick off that process?

5                   **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]**: The Act becomes  
6                   effective on January 1, 2022. So, according to  
7                   Santee Cooper's requirements in the Act, they have  
8                   to engage in stakeholder-engagement activities  
9                   prior to filing the IRP. And ORS's expectation –  
10                  we've had conversations with Santee Cooper, but  
11                  it's expected that those stakeholder discussions  
12                  will last probably over the year of 2022, and the  
13                  Commission could see an IRP, you know, after the  
14                  stakeholder-engagement sessions are concluded. So  
15                  close of 2022, early 2023.

16                  **COMMISSIONER ERVIN**<sup>[A/V]</sup>: Thank you.

17                  **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]**: You're welcome.

18                               [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 7]

19                  All right. Just to wrap it up, we've given  
20                  some hyperlinks to the Commission, related to  
21                  things that we have mentioned in our briefing, such  
22                  that you've got those to take a look at.

23                               [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 8]

24                  And then, I'll be short and sweet, if anyone  
25                  has questions related to our activities with Santee

1 Cooper. I'll be glad to answer.

2 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Good morning, Ms. Hipp.  
3 Thank you for being here today. I just have a few  
4 questions for you. Do you have any concerns  
5 regarding the working relationship between the  
6 Office of Regulatory Staff and Santee Cooper, in  
7 terms of transparency, willingness to participate  
8 in discovery, embracing the new role that you-all  
9 have in regulating Santee Cooper?

10 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** I don't. I don't. I  
11 think it'll be a learning curve, Chairman Williams.  
12 You know, there was certainly a learning curve when  
13 we worked with Santee Cooper under Act 95 and then  
14 again in Act 135. We have a good, good working  
15 relationship with them.

16 They've also, I think as you've heard, have  
17 staffed to be able to work on these new initiatives  
18 and embrace and learn the regulatory process. We  
19 have a successful track record working with Santee  
20 Cooper, coming out of some broadband dark-fiber  
21 leasing, that we've done with them; also, the State  
22 Energy Plan; our work with them on emergency  
23 management. And so we expect to continue that they  
24 are – I don't want to say they're excited, but they  
25 do provide a high level of information and quality

1 information when we ask questions. And they are  
2 eager to talk about things or ask questions before  
3 the issue even will come before the Commission or  
4 comes to ORS's attention, and we appreciate that.

5 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Outstanding. Could you  
6 go back to your Act 90 slide, please, ma'am?

7 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Certainly. Would you  
8 like it on the screen or...

9 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Yes, ma'am, if you  
10 don't mind. If you can – I don't know if you  
11 control that. Is that –

12 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** I don't know if I can.  
13 I have it in front of me, though.

14 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** They're telling me you  
15 can go back.

16 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Okay [indicating].

17 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** One more?

18 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** [Indicating.]

19 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** There, that one.

20 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** There we go.

21 [Reference: ORS Presentation Slide 6]

22 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** So we have some new  
23 responsibilities here, and you said that the  
24 working relationship so far is very, very good –  
25 which is great to hear. When it comes to the

1 matters that Santee Cooper will have to present  
2 before the Commission, what can we do, if  
3 anything – because we're limited; we can't talk to  
4 them outside of the hearing room. What, if  
5 anything, can we do to make sure that, if there are  
6 any questions about, say, competitive procurement  
7 process, integrated resource plans, that there's  
8 not some sort of shock, regulatory shock, dealing  
9 with the new regulatory agency? Is there anything  
10 we can do or is that something you think that you  
11 can coach them through?

12 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** I don't –

13 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** If they even need it.  
14 They may not even need it.

15 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Yeah, no, I – they – our  
16 conversations with Santee Cooper have been very  
17 open and transparent. If they have a question  
18 about the regulatory process, even preceding the  
19 passage of Act 90 – how would this work, what does  
20 this look like – they come to us, they ask  
21 questions, we provide them examples, links to the  
22 DMS, links to your livestream, such that they can  
23 see how the process will work. I know they've been  
24 monitoring your integrated resource process.

25 And so, I don't – while it will be a learning

1 curve, I don't think it will be a shock,  
2 necessarily. I know they've been in contact with  
3 our Legal Department to figure out your process and  
4 procedure, such that their, you know, their time  
5 before you and their interaction with the  
6 Commission goes smoothly.

7 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Very good to  
8 hear. Is there anything that we can do for you –  
9 for you or this process? Areas that we could offer  
10 more?

11 **MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** I don't – I don't think  
12 so.

13 **CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Okay. I don't have any  
14 more questions.

15 Commissioner Williams?

16 **COMMISSIONER C. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Chairman  
17 Williams.

18 Picking up on that, kind of, aspect of how do  
19 we work in a smooth kind of fashion, and looking at  
20 your slides and seeing, you know, what is being  
21 added to your responsibilities, our  
22 responsibilities, Santee Cooper's responsibilities,  
23 are there suggestions that you have regarding  
24 scheduling? I mean, we're finishing up a pretty  
25 full year, and this is just a really open-ended

1 question but I'm wondering if there are things that  
2 we need to be aware of from our scheduling  
3 perspective that will help ensure that smooth and,  
4 you know, reasonable turnaround time with answers.

5 MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]: It's a very good  
6 question. I'm not sure, necessarily, what the  
7 Commission can do. What we found to be very  
8 helpful is an open and transparent dialogue, prior  
9 to a filing or as the filing is being made, about  
10 procedures, procedural deadlines. And so if we can  
11 have the time to have those discussions with all of  
12 the parties, and present to the Commission some  
13 cohesive procedural deadlines, if we're able to do  
14 that, we would like the opportunity to facilitate  
15 that with Santee Cooper, as well. And that seems,  
16 you know, seems to help the process move along in a  
17 more smooth manner.

18 The only other thing I can think of  
19 procedurally relates to when a hearing will be  
20 convened and how much time each party intends to  
21 spend on, you know, their cross or putting up their  
22 case-in-chief. And there could be a way to look at  
23 the schedule, similar to what other states do, and  
24 ask parties to identify – it's not a hard and fast  
25 identification – time blocks that they see are

necessary, so that you can plan according to that.

**COMMISSIONER C. WILLIAMS:** Thank you. I appreciate the answer and the ideas.

**MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN J. WILLIAMS:** Any other questions for Ms. Hipp?

[No response]

Ms. Hipp, that was a great suggestion about time blocks. Don't be surprised if you see that in the future. Is there anything else?

[No response]

All right. Thank you for being here.

**MS. DAWN HIPP [ORS]:** Thank you for having us.

[WHEREUPON, at 10:30 a.m., the proceedings in the above-entitled matter were adjourned.]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-CM-GNSC, Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina, do hereby certify that the foregoing is, to the best of my skill and ability, a true and correct transcript of all the proceedings had regarding a requested allowable ex parte briefing in the above-captioned matter before the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, on this the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2021.



Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-CM/M|GNSC  
Hearings Reporter - Public Service Commission  
of South Carolina

Notary Public in/for the State of South Carolina  
My Commission expires: January 12, 2031.